

NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 1-0708
JOHN BUE/PARIS

MAY 12, 1976

INTELLECTUAL DISSENT IN POLAND

ANNCR:

NEW ARTICLES RECENTLY INTRODUCED INTO THE CONSTITUTION OF POLAND APPEAR TO HAVE CAUSED GRAVE CONCERN AMONG INTELLECTUAL AND CHURCH CIRCLES THERE. ONE LEADING POLISH INTELLECTUAL HAS WRITTEN AN OPEN LETTER TO PARTY SECRETARY EDVARD GIEREK, AND EXCERPTS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN PARIS. VOA CORRESPONDENT JOHN BUE SENDS THIS BACKGROUND REPORT.

VOICE:

THE FRENCH WEEKLY, LE NOUVELLE OBSERVATEUR, POINTS OUT IN ITS CURRENT ISSUE THAT THE CHANGES IN THE POLISH CONSTITUTION, ADOPTED AT LAST YEAR'S COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS, GUARANTEE A LEADING ROLE FOR THE PARTY, DEFINITELY BASE POLISH FOREIGN POLICY ON THE SOVIET ALLIANCE, AND SPECIFY THAT THE RIGHTS OF EACH CITIZEN ARE CONTINGENT UPON THE WAY HE PERFORMS HIS DUTIES.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION WAS NOT GIVEN MUCH OFFICIAL PUBLICITY. HOWEVER, IT SPARKED A VERY SHARP REACTION. ACCORDING TO THE FRENCH MAGAZINE, PROTEST LETTERS WERE SIGNED BY ABOUT FIFTEEN HUNDRED PERSONS AND CHURCH LEADERS PUBLICLY SIDED AGAINST THE REIVISION. AMONG THE INTELLECTUAL DISSENTERS, PROFESSOR EDWARD LIPINSKI, NEARLY NINETY, WAS PARTICULARLY VOCAL. HE HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN MILITANT SOCIALISM FOR NO LESS THAN SEVENTY YEARS. HE IS A MEMBER OF THE POLISH WORKERS OR COMMUNIST PARTY, BUT HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN CALLING FOR SOCIALISM WITH A HUMAN FACE.

"THE COMMUNISTS I AM WILLING TO BACK," HE NOTES IN AN OPEN LETTER TO POLISH COMMUNIST PARTY SECRETARY EDVARD GIEREK, "ARE

ENRICO BERLINGUER OF ITALY, GEORGE MARCHAIS OF FRANCE, THE SPANISH COMMUNISTS, BUT NOT LEONID BREZHNEV OF THE SOVIET UNION."

HE WRITES BLUNTLY THAT THE SOVIET MODEL OF SOCIALISM, WHICH HE FEELS IS DEEPLY INFLUENCED BY THE RUSSIAN TRADITION OF STATE DESPOTISM, IS NOT WHAT IS NEEDED IN POLAND. "LET US NOT BE SERVILE TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION," HE WRITES, "BY ALWAYS FOLLOWING ITS LINE EVEN WHEN IT GOES COUNTER TO OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS."

ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, PROFESSOR LIPINSKI ADVOCATES POLITICAL PLURALISM WITH FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION FOR LABOR UNIONS, CONSUMERS AND THE PRESS. A MINORITY RULE SUCH AS THE ONE EXERCISED BY THE POLISH COMMUNIST PARTY ALWAYS LEADS, HE FEELS, TO TOTALITARIANISM. DESPITE THE HELSINKI ACCORDS, HE NOTES, FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS ARE BANNED WHEN THEY CONTAIN CRITICISM OF THE SOVIET UNION.

POLAND'S ELDER DISSEMINATOR SEEMS TO HAVE FEW ILLUSIONS THAT HIS SUGGESTIONS WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE PRESENT POLISH LEADERSHIP. HE NOTES THAT SECRETARY GIEREK BRANDS SUCH IDEAS AS OUTDATED AND BOURGEOIS. BUT HE WARNS THAT RIOTING IN THE FIFTIES AND SEVENTIES HIGHLIGHTED THE DANGERS OF RIGIDITY. HE RECOGNIZES THAT CHANGE IS DIFFICULT, BUT BELIEVES IT IS POSSIBLE AND THAT MOVES TOWARD MORE INDEPENDENCE AND DEMOCRACY WOULD HAVE THE BACKING OF THE ENTIRE POPULATION.

-0-

GH/RTD